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HOURS OF INSIGHT



MILES MIDWINTER

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Anne Haig Anderson -
with best wishes of
Miles Midwinter.

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HOURS OF INSIGHT.

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HOURS OF INSIGHT.

BY

MILES MIDWINTER.

"tasks in hours of insight will'd"—

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

LONDON

1890.

LOAN STACK

RICHARD CLAY AND SONS, LIMITED,
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Jesus said,

What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?

The blind man said unto Him,

Lord, that I might receive my sight.

Love and Death.

An Interpretation of the Painting, so entitled, by
G. F. WATTS, ESQ., R.A.,
And a Sequel suggested by it.

NAY, Death ! forbear ! forbear !
Force not an entrance there
Where Love would bar the way,
Entreating thee to stay
Thy dread advance ; relent ;
Relinquish thine intent.
Strive not with Love, young Love,
An eagle 'gainst a dove ;
Match not thy giant might
Against that stripling slight :
No sling hath he, nor stone
Wherewith to lay thee prone,
No arrows now to threat

I

B

Thee with condign defeat.
All powerless he stands,
Except for pleading hands,
And fond entreating eyes,
And plaintive sobbing cries.
He cannot stop thy way
If thou must needs to-day
That House of Life invade,
Its inmate to degrade.
But, oh ! wilt thou not heed
The tears, the prayers that plead ?
Wilt thou no pity show,
In prospect of such woe
As hovers round the bed
Of the untimely dead,
When Love is left alone
To make its piteous moan ?

Wilt thou not heed the joy
Of this enraptured boy,
Who here such bliss has known,
In yielding of his own,
And finding kindred love,
As only souls can prove
In mutual embrace,

While in some happy place
Where Joy's own roses spring—
About the house to cling,
And with their fragrant bloom
Irradiate life's gloom—
They dwell in rich content,
Fearful for no event ?

And see, how mere a boy
This Love thou dost annoy ;
How brief his dwelling there ;
How small is yet his share
Of that supreme delight,
Which promised to requite
His eager anxious quest,
With ages of glad rest
Beside that gracious one
Whom he had made his own,
When, in the plighted troth
Of fervid tender youth,
They to each other sware
Enduring bonds to share.
Oh ! think how mere a boy,
And how his utmost joy
Is childlike, immature,

Feeble and pale and poor,
Wanting in perfect speech,
Waiting for Time to teach
The breadth, length, depth, and height
Of that supreme delight
Which is life's choicest dower,
And source of chiefest power.
Manhood alone attains
Love's gladdest goodliest gains ;
And wilt thou not delay
To snatch this form away,
Till Love to manhood grown
Can make its wealth his own,
Persistently explore
Its utmost hidden store
Of tenderness and truth—
Denied to fondest youth ?

And think, yet once again,
How much may yet remain—
Within Love's heart of fire—
Of unconsumed desire
To minister and bless—
With rapturous caress,
With counsel wisely weigh'd,

With service duly paid
In patience and in zeal,
As ever do the leal
In deepest purpose burn,
And fondest longing yearn,
To yield and to impart,
To the one cherish'd heart,
Whate'er they may possess
Of good and graciousness,
Whate'er they may command
By skill, or toil of hand,
Whate'er they may aspire
By effort to acquire,
Till deeds shall fully prove
How true their words of love.

Would'st thou, O Death, deprive
The richest soul alive
Of such prospective gain,
Such bliss in heart and brain,
Such fellowship of joy,
Such help for high employ,
Such means of growth and grace—
As lurk in Love's embrace?

Alas ! all pleas are vain
Death's purpose to restrain ;
He presseth on and in,
To claim as his own kin—
Nearer to him allied
Than husband is to bride,
Than mother to her son,
Or any fondest one
Can to another be
In mere mortality—
To claim, against all other,
As sister and as brother,
Heirs with him of the grave,
All, all whom Love would save.

Ah ! Love what woe is thine !
Thus at thy sacred shrine
Defeated, thwarted, foil'd,
Dishonour'd and despoil'd,
Robb'd of the chosen one,
Left utterly alone—
No vision of delight
To gladden thy fond sight—
No gracious footfall near
To yield thee any cheer—

No hand that thou may'st press
With tender soft caress,—
No tuneful tender tone
For loving antiphone—
Nought, nought but emptiness,
Darkness, and deep distress.

But, oh! abate thy fear,
Nor linger sadly here;
Sit not in anguish down
To make unfruitful moan;
Abide not in the place
Which witnesses disgrace;
Assuage thy poignant woe,
Avenge thee on thy foe.
Lo! wings are thine to fly,
Go! follow where they hie—
Death and thy lost Delight—
Speed thou, and track their flight.

Too quickly thou shalt come
Unto the darksome tomb,
Where Death will hide away
That tenement of clay
Which was so fondly fair.

It seem'd beyond compare,
Ideal in its grace
Of movement, form, and face ;
Worthy to be exempt
From Death's supreme contempt ;
Most worthy to abide
A thing of joy and pride,
Of worship and of praise
For endless nights and days.

Within that dreadful tomb
Impenetrable gloom
Shall fill thee with dismay,
And wailing thou shalt say
Alas ! must I now here
Part me from all that's dear ?
My quest so soon achieved,
So hopelessly deceived ?
No vision, and no voice,
To bid me yet rejoice ?
Here then will I lie down,
Here cast away my crown,
And yield my fervid breath
To Sorrow and to Death.

Then in that darkest hour
The voice of Sovereign Power
Shall steal into thy heart,
And still its fever'd smart,
With some such words of cheer
As on my inner ear
Once fell, and now re-told
May serve to make thee bold—
“ Delay not by this prison,
She is not here, but risen :
The casket, richly wrought,
Was yet more richly fraught—
The house of fair design
Had tenant more divine.
He who the casket stole
Got not its treasure—soul ;
Or ere the house fell down
Its spirit-guest had flown.

“ Replume thy wings, arise !
Take flight to yon fair skies,
And where the shining portal
Admits each glad immortal,
Press thou within, and claim,
In virtue of My Name,

To be assured that there—
Exempt from every care,
Ennobled with high place
And perfected in grace,
Fulfill'd with utmost joy
In loving glad employ,
And safe from chance of ill—
Thy well-beloved doth dwell.

“ Then too may'st thou discern,
If grace be thine to learn,
How Love, bereav'd on earth,
Attains to peace, yea ! mirth,
Drawn forth, drawn up on high—
As waters to the sky
From out the deep salt sea—
More pure, more blest to be :
To seek and ante-date
Its high immortal state :
To live within the scope
Of beatific hope :
To gain some grateful measure
Of that eternal treasure
Which to the poor is wealth,
And to the suffering health :

To count all things but loss,
Mere burden, hindrance, dross,
Which do not help the soul
To reach its glorious goal,
And rise to the full stature
Of its immortal nature.

“Thence to thy house return
To sorrow, yet to yearn,
And hopefully to watch,
Till he shall lift thy latch,
Who then shall name thy name,
And thy submission claim,
Working his vengeful will
On that which he can kill,
And hurrying away,
From light of living day,
Thy manly form and frame
To charnel-house of shame.

“Fear not in that dread hour !
Mine is the greater power ;
In Me thou shalt have life,
And, far from earthly strife,
In mansions long prepared,

Bliss shall be found, and shared
With all the good and true
Honoured and loved by you—
To which in turn shall come
All who are left to roam
The wilderness of Time,
Desiring that fair clime
Where sin and sorrow cease
In sanctity and peace ;
Where love attains its hope
In full unfetter'd scope ;
Where joy new strength acquires,
And never fails nor tires ;
Where life, with blest repose,
Ampler and nobler grows ;
And those grand heights are gain'd
To which the best have strain'd,
Who found not here their rest,
But ever onward prest,
By inward faith assured
Of good to be secured,
When, in the World of Light,
Faith shall be lost in sight."

En Articulo Mortis.

NAY ! come not here to weep,
Dear friends who hold me dear,
Not till I fall asleep

Indulge "fond nature's" tear ;
Make now no loud lament,
Give not your sorrow voice,
Nay ! teach me to repent,
And help me to rejoice.

What ! mean ye still to weep,
To weep and break my heart ?
Since I my tryst to keep
With Christ from you must part :
Your love has been indeed
A wonderful delight,
Yet must it not impede
My spirit's happy flight.

My heart would break e'en now
In this eventful hour,
If heaven should allow
The clouds of grief to lour ;
If now the sense of loss
Possess'd my trembling soul,
How could I calmly cross
Death's river to life's goal ?

Nay ! weep not, nor distress
My spirit I implore,
Not that I love you less,
But Christ supremely more :
I breathe one last adieu !
Take one more last embrace,
And turn my gaze from you
To His transcendent face.

Now summon Faith and Hope,
Call hither blithe-heart Joy,
With this last hour to cope
All gracious powers employ ;
Bid them rehearse some strain
Prophetic of the peace
Which ransom'd souls attain
When mortal conflicts cease.

Speed ye your parting guest
With promises of cheer ;
Inspire this anxious breast
With thoughts of Him most dear !
Whose welcome and " well-done "
I weary now to gain—
The prize for which I run,
The mark towards which I strain.

The Mystery of Pain.

WHY should a mortal man complain
When tortured with exhausting pain?
Why murmur at his little share
Of all the ills that flesh must bear?
Must bear! ah, yes! there lies the strain,
For why this heritage of pain,
This "common lot" of weary woe
Which all, without exception, know?

If it were clear that pain were sent
As Heaven's indignant punishment
For sin, or sins, then who would dare
To murmur at his little share?
Much less if a Divine intent
Of kindly skilful chastisement
Ordain'd the pang, could any then

Excuse themselves as mortal men,
And claim to be exempt from pain ;
For none the thesis can sustain
That any man is free from blame,
Free from the need of honest shame,
Incapable of higher good.
Could that be clearly understood,
And did the suffering smite the sin,
And leave no lurking doubt within
As to its aim, could we conclude
This thing or that, this or that mood,
Has griev'd or justly anger'd Heaven,
And lo ! its sure decisive leven
Reveals it, and rebukes at once
The unmistakable offence—
That were conclusive, that were gain
Worth any medicable pain.
Full welcome then the sudden smart
Which tutor'd a forgetful heart ;
Welcome the throes which spoil'd our ease
But warn'd us of a deep disease ;
And welcome too the lingering pain
Which taught us to uncoil the chain
Wherewith sin subtly binds the soul,
And fetters fast its self-control.

Not always, and not often thus
Does pain in mercy visit us—
Not as a righteous judge to whom
'Tis given to decide our doom,
Denounce our doings, and declare
The penalty we needs must bear,
Who in our follies and our flaws
Offend 'gainst Heaven's eternal laws.
Not as a prophet to reveal
Our fault, and make us deeply feel
Its guilt, its shame, its misery,
Outweighing all our agony ;
And still denouncing till we yearn
For healthier truer life, and turn
With full intent of heart and mind
The means of such a life to find—
Repent, renounce our evil deeds,
And, whilst the heart with anguish bleeds,
Direct our steps into the way
Wherefrom in sin they went astray.

Not always, and not often thus
Does pain in mercy visit us—
Not as a good physician comes
To sadden, yet make glad, our homes—

To trace the cause in the effect,
Say "This avoid, and that reject :
Your malady shall do you good
If, now its source is understood,
You practise abstinence, and school
Your conduct by a wiser rule."

Not always, and not often thus,
Does pain in mercy visit us—
Alike its cause and its design
We strive but vainly to assign ;
Or if the cause we chance to find
It is not in the heart or mind :
No moral blame, no want of wit
Is found to have occasion'd it ;
Some spice of venom in the air
Touch'd us and took us unaware ;
Some latent mischief in the blood
Developed by unwholesome food ;
Some accident beyond control—
How then shall these instruct the soul ?

Alas ! too often they but vex
The soul they puzzle and perplex—
We murmur at the useless trial
Which calls for weary self-denial—
We fret and peevishly complain

When rack'd and torn with poignant pain—
We petulantly groan and sigh
When dull disease works languidly.

Yet why should mortal man complain
When pinion'd by affliction's chain?
A mortal man at least should know
One meaning in such form of woe :
A mortal man who needs must die
Yet feels not his mortality,
Who glows with life in heart and brain
Which soon shall freeze and fail again,
Who strides the earth and dwells at ease
Though soon his little reign shall cease,
Who gathers grain and goods and gold
In hands which ere long shall be cold—
To such an one pain should not be
A meaningless calamity :
It speaketh with a friend's kind voice
E'en though it sayeth not—rejoice !
Its wounds are faithful, and its word
Of timely warning should be heard,
Like that grim monitor of old
Who daily to his monarch told
“Remember thou art mortal man”—
So pain shall serve Heaven's gracious plan.

A Song in the Night.

TOO often in health
The pride as of wealth
Is lavish of life's golden store,
And, spendthrifts of time,
We but sing to the chime,
Which rings out when day is no more.

Ah ! could we but prove
That the labour of love
In the spirit of faith had been wrought,
And all the grim strife
Of militant life
With weapons of righteousness fought ;

Could Hope make her boast
That on Heaven's calm coast
Her anchor still firmly endured,
And Joy lift her eye
To the starry lit sky
And feel herself thither allured ;

Oh ! rich then and strong
The rapturous song—
The carol, the choral of praise—
With which at day's close
We might welcome repose,
Reviewing our works and our ways.

But sitting at ease,
Nor seeking to please
Our neighbour, each one, for his good,
And mid the stern strife
Of death's struggle with life
Indulging a dissolute mood ;

Whilst Love lies asleep,
And Faith and Hope keep
Dull watch in the gloom by her side—
We vex the sad earth
With echoes of mirth,
And Heaven by our song is defied.

Lo ! languor and pain
Teach a truthfuller strain
And music more justly attuned ;
Out of weakness made strong
We learn a new song,
As blossoms the tree which is pruned.

A sweet solemn plaint,
Soft, tremulous, faint,
Flows forth from the spirit subdued,
Not joy now but grief
Gives the heart its relief,
And by sorrow the soul is renewed.

Life seen in review
Discloses anew
Its vanity, listlessness, sin :
In prospect beheld
Its worth is revealed,
And we pant all its triumphs to win.

In sadness we own
The days and years flown
Occasions we fain would recall ;
Our joys we renounce,
Our doings denounce,
And to blot them tears streamingly fall.

Again the song swells
From the heart's inmost cells,
And now in more passionate tone—
A song of desire,
Of words which aspire
To rise to the Heavenly Throne.

“ O Thou, who, most High
In Thy glory, art nigh
To all who invoke Thy great Name,
Incline now Thine ear
My trouble to hear,
And grant me the blessings I claim.

“ I humbly repent
For time much mis-spent,
And treasure too squander'd or hid ;
Thou gavest me store,
Therewith to make more,
And I did not the thing I was bid.

“ I cannot to-day
The talents repay
Which Thou to my care did'st entrust :
Alas ! for my soul,
Thieves brake through and stole,
And some are corrupted with rust.

“ Lord, wilt Thou forego
The debt which I owe,
And freely my trespass forgive ?
Yea ! wilt Thou also—
New blessings bestow,
And grant me Thy servant to live ?

“ Vouchsafe me, good Lord,
Thy pardoning word—
‘ Thy sins I forgive, go in peace ’—
My spirit renew,
And daily endue
My soul with all gifts of increase.

“ Should self-love and sloth
E’er make me feel loth
To the task which Thy purpose demands,
Soon, soon, may I hear
Thine accents of fear
Rebuking my profitless hands.

“ The wisdom I need
For word and for deed
Do Thou from Thy fulness impart ;
Sweet charity’s glow—
Joy mingled with woe—
Oh ! keep this alive in my heart.

“And for work to be done,
And victories won
Where sin holds dominion abhorr’d,
Alone, or with those
Who are sin’s leaguèd foes,
May I go in the strength of the Lord.

“So may all my days
Be fill’d with **Thy** praise,
And fruitful of good to mankind,
And life’s last ‘good night’
Be a thing of delight,
With no vain regrets left behind.”

Without and Within.

Without.

BEHOLD! O man I stand
Without the door, and knock,
Stretch forth a willing hand
And turn the heavy lock ;
I would come in and sup
With thee, and thou with Me,
Partake thy bitter cup,
And with My love feast thee.

Within.

Nay, Lord, I cannot dare
That Thou should'st come within,
Thou could'st not, must not share
This devil's cup of sin ;
And I, how could I taste
The supper Thou would'st spread?
"It is not meet to waste
On dogs the children's bread."

Without.

Ah ! foolish and unwise,
Think not My love to spurn,
Nor with perverse replies
Me from thy door to turn ;
Long-suffering I sought,
Long-lingering I plead,
That sinners may be brought
My patient love to heed.

Within.

Yea ! Lord, I know Thy love,
Too well Thy love I know,
That love despised must prove
My everlasting woe ;
My heart hath made her choice
Of these forbidden things,
She hears, she knows Thy voice,
But to her lust she clings.

Without.

Is it indeed so true
Thy heart hath made her choice?
And can she witness too
That so she doth rejoice?
Doth she with full consent
Embrace her chosen good?
And with entire content
Indulge her wilful mood?

Within.

Content? ah! no, that word
Filleth my heart with dole,
Sharp as a two-edg'd sword
It pierces through my soul;
It dissipates my peace
And fills me with alarm;
Cease, Lord, Thy troubling, cease
To work me so much harm.

Without.

How shall I cease to chide,
Or leave thee to thy smart,
Since thou, in foolish pride,
Dost flatter thy fond heart
That peace may then return,
And soothe thee with content ?
Thou dost but vainly yearn—
Believe Me, and repent.

Within.

Shall peace return no more ?
Must I thus dwell alone ?
Thou standing at the door,
I making bitter moan,
And sighing for content
Which cannot enter in ?
Why, Lord, dost Thou prevent
The pleasant peace of sin ?

Without.

Peace ? peace ? there is no peace
For sinners in their sin,
A false delusive ease
Is all that they may win ;
An opiate that distils
Peace through the sinner's veins,
Kills slowly, surely kills,
E'en though it ease his pains.

Within.

Leave me then, now, this boon,
This restful medicine,
Though death must come full soon
I cannot quit my sin ;
I cannot now forego
The life which now I live,
I cannot hope to know
The life that Thou would'st give.

Without.

Yea ! now, in this same hour,
If thou wilt do My word,
Thou shalt find all My power
Within thy spirit stirr'd ;
Rise, thou shalt be made whole,
And fill'd with rich increase,
New life shall thrill thy soul
And yield thee perfect peace.

Within.

Now ? now ? by that same sign
I put Thee, Lord, to proof,
The word is Thine, not mine,
Enter beneath my roof :
Come in, come in, but, oh !
Forgive Thy servant, Lord,
That he has been so slow
To trust Thy gracious word.

Without.

'Tis done ; I all forgive,
And freely enter in
Beneath thy roof to live,
And share thy shame of sin.
Take thou and eat this bread—
For thee it has been broken—
Drink, and lift up thy head,
This wine is My love-token.

Within.

Truly ! this wine makes glad,
This bread gives strength of heart,
Lord, I was wholly mad
In bidding Thee depart :
Now give me evermore
This bread, this wine of love,
So will I Thee adore,
And Thy disciple prove.

The Sleep of the Beloved.

A rejoinder to "The Sleep"
by Mrs. E. B. BROWNING.

'TIS sweetly thought and sweetly said
This verse which o'er the happy dead
Forbids surviving friends to weep ;
Yet this was not the psalmist's thought,
Whose "music deep" first clearly taught—
"He giveth His belovèd sleep."

"The sleep of death," as fact and phrase,
Was sadly known in those far days,
And wrought into men's spirits deep :
Till in their agony they pray'd,
And "lighten Thou our eyes" they said,
"Lest we the sleep of death shall sleep."

Death was for them a thing of dread,
They wail'd for the untimely dead
As for the sun gone down by day,
And those who reach'd "a good old age"
Found record in the sacred page
As none were happier than they.

Life was to them a gracious boon,
They revell'd in it as, at noon,
The sun rejoices in its sway ;
Its purpose and its power they knew,
And with devotion strong and true
They work'd whilst it was call'd to-day.

No weary loathing of the light,
No listless longing for the night
Unnerv'd their healthful energies,
They rose up early, sat up late,
Loved life, and toil'd in their estate,
Intent on opportunities.

O'ermuch they toil'd, they stinted rest,
Keen apprehensions fill'd their breast,
They ate the bread of carefulness ;
A man's own labour must afford,
They thought, his only sure reward,
And so they fail'd from prayerfulness :

From prayerfulness and calm repose
On Him who all His creatures knows,
As the Good Shepherd knows His sheep ;
Then spake that voice, which echoes yet,
Reproving restlessness and fret—
“ He giveth His belovèd sleep.”

’Tis now as then, and we as they
Too anxiously prolong the day,
Too eagerly both sow and reap,
Regarding not the living Lord,
And heeding not the living word—
“ He giveth His belovèd sleep.”

A gracious word for toiling men—
Wearied in hand and heart and brain,
Yet gaining not the gold they need—
It suffers them a while to rest,
It bids them slumber, and be blest
By Him who doth the ravens feed.

Not carking care, not ceaseless toil
Quickens the seed within the soil,
Nor must the sower watchful keep—
He sows, the Harvest Lord ordains
The former and the latter rains,
And “giveth His belovèd sleep.”

And when with sheaves the reapers come
Rejoicing at the harvest-home,
Exulting in the grain they heap,
What truer thought can thrill their tongue
Than this which Israel's psalmist sung—
“He giveth His belovèd sleep”?

For He who trustful Israel keeps
Behold! He slumbers not nor sleeps,
Nor intermits His watchfulness;
He wakes whilst tired eyelids close,
He works whilst labourers repose—
So are they filled with plenteousness.

Oh! for such sleep to seal our eyes
And own our evening sacrifice,
Whilst hearts distrustful watch and weep;
From toil and care to find release,
Hush'd by His whisper'd blessing—“Peace!”
Who “giveth His belovèd sleep.”

Charity.

As presented in a picture by BRITON RIVIÈRE, ESQ., R.A.

“IT is not meet to take the children’s bread
And cast it to the dogs,” the Master said ;
Should then the children give their bread away
To starving dogs, what would He thereto say ?

I would that He could look upon this group
To picture which high art has dared to stoop,
And that His gracious utterance could declare
The wealth of tender teaching that lurks there.

A wintry scene—snow lying on the ground,
An old church door, a thin Italian hound,
A mongrel cur, and girl whose piteous plight
Has won compassion in some Christian’s sight.

Homeless and destitute and poorly clad,
Barefoot, bareheaded, starved and cold and sad,
She through the pitiless December air
Has wandered up and down, scarce heeding where.

One kindly eye at length has glimpsed her form,
One helpful heart with fellow-feeling warm,
Has thrilled with sympathetic touch of chill,
Then hastened its kind office to fulfil.

Hunger, most urgent need, must be appeased,
And with no second thought a loaf is seized,
Divided, and a portion gladly given,
With love which works therein like a new leaven.

Fed, clothed, and warmed, in feeling, by this act,
The wanderer keeps her little store intact
Until she finds a shelter and a seat
Where with repose her banquet she may eat.

An old church porch invites her to its gloom—
The narrow step affords her ample room—
There she will sit and take her heaven-sent meal,
And there with thanks to heaven in spirit kneel.

The silent grace scarce rendered, and the food
As yet untouched which looks so very good ;
Two homeless dogs come shivering to her seat,
And pause, and whine, and all but lick her feet.

More fortunate than she their hairy coats
Defend them from the frost, but their pinched throats,
Lank limbs, lean loins, and sad expressive eyes
Denote them sharers in want's miseries.

A mute appeal is all that they can make,
But, ah ! to those who have endured heart-ache
What more is needed than a silent plea,
What words more irresistible could be ?

She sees their state, their eager strong desire,
And thinking not how she may yet require
Each precious crumb, she breaks the bread, and gives—
Her very flesh—the food by which she lives.

Could now the Master look upon that scene,
And could His voice its gracious teaching glean,
What would He find and what reveal to us ?
Might He not haply point its moral thus :—

This damsel hath herein a good work wrought,
And wheresoever charity is taught
There let this deed that she hath done be told
To kindly love in hearts unkindly cold :

To kindle love e'en to the humble brute—
So helpless and so weak when destitute,
So patient, so long-suffering, so resigned,
So utterly dependent on mankind.

To kindle love towards those helpless poor
Who needs must beg their bread from door to door,
Who, poor in goods, are oftentimes rich in grace,
The outcasts, yet the chosen of the race.

To kindle love to Me from whom was caught
The inspiration of this generous thought,
Who gave Myself the Bread of Life to be,
That all of woman born might live through Me.

Help for the Helpless.

“GOD help him !” I exclaim’d, at sight of one
Who saw not me, his vision quite foredone :—
Sight’s hapless organs one obscure eyeball
One eyeless socket, whence did freely fall,
As from full founts, continuous hot tears—
And he a boy, a child of tender years.

“God help him !” Only so could I express
Instinctive sense of my own helplessness
And his, and of all possible human aid,
To mitigate the load upon him laid,
To guide his wilder’d footsteps, or to make
More clear, more smooth, the path that he must take.

“God help him !” Ah ! but wherefore did not He
Lend and send help while yet the boy could see ?

When first disease assail'd the tender frame,
Could He behold and not arrest the flame
Which burn'd so fiercely, until all was dark
Save in the embers, life's faint fitful spark ?

Could He behold ? or is He also blind
To all the countless ills of humankind ?
Discerning not mute uncomplaining woe ?
Beholding not lorn sufferers laid low ?
Blind to all sights which fill men's eyes with tears ?
Hopelessly blind through all the lingering years ?

If blind then deaf perchance ! and all in vain
The poor dumb sufferer would to Him complain,
In vain appeal with utmost stress of prayer ;
Who heareth not, nor sees, how can He care ?
Yea ! all in vain " God help him " I exclaim,
My pity, my concern, fly with false aim.

Yet can it be that He nor sees nor hears—
He who hath given to man both eyes and ears ?
Or may it be that seeing hearing all
Who mutely agonise or faintly call
For help and succour, He is prompt to aid,
And that His angels are opposed and stayed ?

Opposed and stayed even by human sin,
Which lets them not their kindly victories win ;
Which knows them not, and heeds not when they speak,
And yields them not the assistance that they seek ;
Which in its heartlessness and want of skill
Witholds relief, and frustrates Heaven's goodwill ?

Yea ! thus it is, and man may not accuse
His Maker, may not think Him to refuse
His sympathy, His aid from suffering men,
Nor when they call, nor when they pine, nor when—
As will befall in fits of wild despair—
Him they blaspheme, and all His terrors dare.

Divinest will has need of human skill
And love and zeal its purpose to fulfil.
“ Whom shall We send, and who for Us will go ? ”
So speaks the Holy One at sight of woe,
And waits the eager heart, the ready hand,
To do the bidding of His high command.

Much more, His Spirit pleads and strives to move
The souls of men with sympathetic love—
Love for their fellows as for brother men,
Love like the Father's for His dear children,
Love passionate and merciful and wise,
And prompt withal to apply swift remedies.

So man may not escape the shame and blame
Of ills which desolate the human frame ;
May not escape the charge which lays on him
Responsibility for life and limb :
May not with unconcern regard their lot
Whose sufferings seem to say—God hath forgot.

Nay ! every thrill of anguish which the sight
Or dread of evil, be it grave or slight,
Inflicts upon the heart—nay ! every fear
Which claims the tribute of a sigh or tear,
Is God's own voice commanding Pity and Love
To waken and arise their skill to prove.

To obey that summons truly is to be
With God a fellow-worker, and if He
Finds so efficient help He will not fail
To make it serve His purpose, and avail
For such defect as nature's limits leave
Open to Him to frustrate or relieve.

Therefore " God help him " was not a vain cry
When face to face with that calamity ;
So Pity stirr'd and waken'd Love, and she,
Lamenting much her lack of remedy,
Did what she could, and what she had she gave,
To make the sufferer patient, calm, and brave.

The help was God's ; the helper only one
By whom His kindly will was gladly done,
Nor shall the helpless fail of life-long aid
If every heart by God's good angels sway'd
Yields to the impulse, and does what it can
To nerve the boy and fortify the man.

And little would remain on this fair earth
To mar the music of man's mortal mirth,
If men, compassionate of human needs,
Were prompt to yield the fruitage of good deeds,
'To minister with kindness and with skill
Nature's sure remedies for every ill.

Little : and less if men, considerate
Of all the insidious risks of human fate,
Stood on the alert, with open eye and hand,
Ready the approach of mischief to withstand,
To see and to avert the impending blow,
To check and counteract the subtle foe.

God speed the day when Love in every heart
Shall wait prepared to play her instant part,
Full arm'd with knowledge shall be skill'd to ply
Her weapons, and all enemies defy ;
Yielding alone to the exactor Death
The tardy tribute of man's forfeit breath.

The Praise of Quietness.

With a copy of
"The Memorials of a Quiet Life."
"Study to be quiet."—ST. PAUL.

ONE living poet, now too long
Neglectful of his gracious art,
Is dower'd with a quiet heart
Which pulsates in most placid song.¹

Mid Bacchanalian noise, and rush
Of multitudes in eager strife,
He finds but weariness in life,
And sighs for "quiet" and for "hush."

And so in many a tender tone
He breathes a longing—half despair—
For quiet living, free from care,
And with calm joys suffus'd alone.

¹ Matthew Arnold, then unhappily diverted to other work.

But shall there not a bard arise
To render service more complete,
And with rich strains, more full, more sweet,
Enkindle all men's sympathies ?

Till Quietness, invoked by all,
Shall everywhere her gifts diffuse,
Refresh the earth with gentle dews,
And on man's life like showers fall—

To soothe wild passions, and allay
The wasting fever and the fret
Of hot desire and keen regret,
Which wear the heart's delight away ?

Awaiting that triumphant strain,
Glad greeting be the homage due
Wherewith we hail the happy few
In whom blest Quietness doth reign.

Nor least to her whose lovely life,
Depicted in these pages, shows
From morning's prime to evening's close,
A heart unvex'd by foolish strife.

Such charm pervades the truthful page
As well the reader's heart may move
To seek the grace whose virtues prove
So constant to inconstant age.

And thus from out the book may grow
New lives possess'd of perfect peace,
Which in their turn shall yield increase,
And bring the bard we long to know.

On an Anniversary Sermon.

A PLATFORM speech ! all points and platitudes,
Amen to which had fitly been a cheer
Of rough applause, with bravo ! and hear, hear !
From straining throats of eager multitudes.
Was it for this the minster's ample calm
Was from the outer eager world shut in ?
Ah ! no, not thus should echo worldly din
Here where men meet for prayer and peaceful psalm.
Rather we long for his persuasive speech
Whose doctrine dropped as rain, as dew distill'd ;
So might the church's empty aisles be fill'd,
And not in vain her teachers stand and teach :
Then might the Spirit's gracious fruits abound,
And in God's vineyard no wild grapes be found.

“Be Thankful.”

(Communion Service.)

SIMPLE words of exhortation !
Yet how truly they express
All the weight of obligation
Laid on those who Christ confess.

“Take and eat this bread, thus broken,
In remembrance of thy Lord,
Sacred and appointed token
Of His death for thee endured.

“In thy heart too, with thanksgiving,
Feed on Him, the Living Bread,
Gladly knowing and believing
He is risen from the dead.

“ Drink this wine, the awful semblance
Of Christ’s blood poured forth for thee,
And with tender sad remembrance
Of His dying, thankful be.

“ Thankful with deep silent feeling
And with whispered words of love,
As, before the table kneeling,
Heart and soul His kindness prove.

“ Thankful with profound emotion
Going hence in peace and joy,
Thankful with entire devotion
Of thy life to His employ.

“ Thankfulness sustained shall mould thee
To the image of His grace,
And its joyous strength uphold thee
In the onward heavenward race.

“ Thankfulness thy load shall lighten
Journeying in toilsome ways,
Thankfulness thy prospect brighten
In life’s dark and wintry days.”

Thus the words of exhortation
Spake within my heart one day
As, in act of dedication,
Low I kneel'd to praise and pray.

Now again in spirit kneeling
Praise and prayer inspire my song,
And, O Christ, to Thee appealing,
I beseech Thee make me strong.

Praise I give Thee for the kindness
Which instructs me truth to know,
Opes mine ears, relieves my blindness,
Teaches gratitude to flow.

And with eager supplication,
Lord, I ask that Thou wilt give
Energy of consecration,
And enable me to live.

So to live as that my living—
Harmonized in all its ways—
Like a strain of rich thanksgiving
Shall reverberate Thy praise.

The Seven Joys of Christmas.

A Carol.

THE first good joy that Christians have
In keeping Christmas-day,
Is that the Father sent His Son
To put all sin away ;
To put all sin away, good Lord !
Then happy may we be,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
To all eternity.

The next good joy that Christians have,
No greater joy they can,
Is that the eternal Son of God
Became the Son of Man :
Became the Son of Man, good Lord !
&c., &c.

The next good joy that Christians have
Upon the Christmas morn,
Is that the Saviour, Jesus Christ,
As at this time was born :
As at this time was born, good Lord !
 &c., &c.

The next good joy that Christians have
Is in the angel's word,
" Good tidings of great joy I bring
Of Christ which is the Lord " :
Of Christ which is the Lord, good Lord !
 &c., &c.

The next good joy that Christians have
Is in the angels' mirth,
" All glory be to God on high,
Peace and goodwill on earth " :
Peace and goodwill on earth, good Lord !
 &c., &c.

The next good joy that Christians have
Is with the shepherds shared ;
Who in the manger found the Babe
And all His praise declared :
And all His praise declared, good Lord !
 &c., &c.

The next good joy that Christians have
Is with the Mother mild,
Who kept and pondered in her heart
All that concerned her Child :
All that concerned her Child, good Lord !
Then happy may we be,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
To all eternity.

Alone; yet not Alone.

John xvi. 32.

“**Y**E shall be scattered each one to his own,
And I in suffering shall be left alone :
Yet am I not alone, for still with Me
Abides the Father My sure help to be.”

So to His friends and followers Christ spake,
Preparing His last trial to undertake :
Then to the Father, for whose love He yearn'd,
With supplications and with tears He turn'd.

Like loneliness attends all human fate,
Some hour befalls which leaves us desolate,
Some sudden stroke, some blow severe descends
And puts away our lovers and our friends.

In that lone hour one Presence lingers near,
One Friend to whom the friendless are most dear,
He whom Messiah as "The Father" knew,
To whom He witnessed as "Our Father" too.

To know Him near in such extreme distress
Alleviates the cup of bitterness,
For He partakes thereof, and bids us sup
With Him from out love's sacramental cup.

And in His fellowship—sweet wondrous thought—
As children by a father fondly taught,
Learning both love and lore, we come to know
Such joy and wisdom as no tongue can show.

Turn we to Him in every trial hour,
When storm clouds break as when they do but lour,
Then through the gloom His face will quickly shine
And on our darkness shed a light divine.

Riches laid up on Earth.

CALL it not wealth ! 'tis poverty, yea ! worse,
Though riches shower down like summer rain,
And gold accumulates like ripened grain,
It is a sore affliction and a curse,
If to the harvesting go forth alone
Greed, Avarice, Luxury, the fields to reap,
And in their glutted garner high to heap
The utmost gleanings. Merely to have and own
Can this be wealth ? It serves no gracious end :
There is no gain of goodness, kindness, love,
No growth of generosity to prove
The heart enlarged. What doth it but distend
The purse, augment the pride, inflate the lust,
And all the soul corrode with wasting rust ?

Post Mortem.

O H ! that the man whose death a will discovers
Had in his day a living will display'd,
Dispensing with an open hand kind aid !
Then had he made all generous men his lovers.
The few who profit now are thankless debtors ;
Gifts from dead hands awake no living love,
The clutch is loosed, yet no impulses move,
The fingers but relax at Death's cold fetters.
They kept till they no longer could retain
The wealth which far surpass'd its owner's need,
Serving no use but to delight his greed,
And gratify his appetite for gain.
Who now will bless him ? Who that will not weep,
Since Death extorts what life was spent to keep ?

To a Cross-Bearer.

To Marion

BY the cross upon thy breast,
Maiden ! sin appears confess,
For a badge of shame, not pride,
Is that cross whereon Christ died.

*with an in
cross + ne*

By the cross upon thy breast
May thy trust too be exprest,
Trust in Jesus who alone
Could thereby for sin atone.

By the cross upon thy breast,
I beseech thee do thy best,
Do thy best before the world
As beneath Christ's flag unfurl'd

By the cross upon thy breast
May no evil thee molest,
But cower and shrink dismay'd
At that sacred sign display'd.

Wearing, bearing that sad sign
Of man's enmity malign,
That blest sign of dying love,
Oh ! strive thou thy love to prove.

Counting all things else but loss
Cling for ever to the cross,
And, with Jesus crucified,
Glory thou in nought beside.

Taking thus Christ's easy yoke,
All thy stubborn self-will broke,
Learn of Him the meek, the lowly,
Him the patient, perfect, holy.

Then when labouring and o'erladen,
Wayworn, weak, and weary, maiden !
Thou shalt find in Him sweet rest,
As His cross upon thy breast.

At the Oratory, Birmingham.

I THOUGHT to hear that rich electric voice
Which once from Oxford thrill'd throughout the
land,
Then did this hope make my keen heart rejoice,
And for the occasion eagerly I plann'd.

I journeyed far, and sought "the house of prayer"
Intent to treasure up his lightest word,
But, though "the old man eloquent" was there,
No faintest accent from his lips I heard.

I mark'd his stalwart form, his snow-white head,
His strong bold features, and his gracious mien,
Feeling the while Religion there had shed
Its sweetest soothing, and its purest sheen.

Carden
Hue

I look'd that he should mount the pulpit-stair
And plead for God, for truth, for righteousness,
But, oh ! mischance, the Bishop's pastoral care
Provided for my hope a Jacob's mess.

Yet, though I heard not the august old man,
I did not wholly miss my cherish'd aim,
My strong emotions to his footstool ran,
And paid their homage to his noble fame.

It seemed to me, St. Philip, whom he loves,
The "old man of meek aspect," whom he admires,
Not all unmindful of his worship proves,
Not quite regardless of his pure desires.

"Oh, sainted Philip, look on us that we
Thy loveliness may copy here " he pray'd,
And Philip with a saint's prompt sympathy
Vouchsafed the suppliant his generous aid.

No, no, not Philip, but "the Living Word,"
"The Brightness Increate," "the Sinless One,"
Adored and magnified as Philip's Lord,
Jesu reveals this grace to "Philip's son."

Oh ! happy soul whose worship is thus true,
Reaching the mark though devious its course,
'Twas not in vain I sat and gazed on you,
The look inspired me with a heavenly force.

As thou with Philip, I with thee aspire,
With both I join in one supreme accord,
And pray, with threefold fervour of desire,
Christ-like to be in aspect, deed, and word.

NOTE.—The various quotations are from the poems "ST. PHILIP IN HIMSELF" and "ST. PHILIP IN HIS GOD" in *Verses on various Occasions* by Cardinal Newman.

Self=Renunciation.

NOT what I am, but what I aim to be,
That, O my God ! do Thou consider me,
And in Thy grace regard each pure desire,
And all the hopes which unto Thee aspire.

Not what I am, but what I aim to be ;
Not held and hindered by infirmity,
But stout of heart, and resolute of will
Unwearyingly Thy precepts to fulfil.

Not what I am, but what I aim to be ;
Not yielding to the world's captivity,
Not Fashion's slave, nor Custom's abject thrall,
But ever ready to obey Thy call.

Not what I am, but what I aim to be ;
Not bound by sin, but set for ever free,
Not held in bondage by taskmasters stern,
But swift to run as diligent to learn.

Not what I am, but what I aim to be ;
Not as corrupted by iniquity,
But as, in truth, loathing the taint of sin,
And striving ever to be pure within.

Not what I am, but what I aim to be ;
Like to Thy Son in all sincerity,
Within my heart the glow of filial love,
And in my life the deeds Thou wilt approve.

Not what I am, but what I aim to be,
That, O my God ! do Thou confirm in me ;
Complete the work Thy Spirit has begun,
And make my aims and my attainments one.

Not what I am, but what I aim to be,
That, O my God ! do Thou consider me,
Regarding not the evil I have done,
But justifying me in Thy dear Son.

Penance.

NOT this—that, I myself may mercy find
And be absolved from all my guiltiness ;
Not for reprieve from judgment and duress
Justly to evil deeds by Heaven assigned ;
Not for escape from penalty and pain
Due to transgression, do I make my prayer,
With utmost urgency and deepest care,
When at the Father's footstool I complain :
But that the evil done be brought to nought,
Not germinate, and grow, as noxious weed,
Replenishing the earth with baneful seed—
And that the souls on which I may have wrought
With hurtful influence may be endued
With Heavenly grace, and savingly renewed.

The Flower which makes the Spring.

From the French of THÉOPHILE GAUTIER.

SOON the chestnut trees will bloom
On the terrace of St. John,
Whence afar in grandeur loom
Mountains blue with silver crown.

Even now the leaves burst through
Winter's bonds of yesterday,
And their gracious pale green hue
On the tender branch display.

But in vain the sun yet shines,
And the sap awakened flows ;
On dull boughs the flower declines
Its white spear-heads to disclose.

Notwithstanding this the peach
 Reddens with the blush of youth,
And the apple, frank of speech,
 Blossoms like the tongue of truth.

E'en veronica makes bold—
 Won by nature's wooings bland—
To put forth its heads of gold
 In the meadows near at hand.

I must speedily return
 To the region where I live,
Chestnuts hasten, let me learn
 All the charm you have to give.

Need is none you should be shy,
 Safely may you grace the fête,
O'er you shines an azure sky,
 And May soon assumes her state.

Of your pity grant this joy
 To the poet in his grief,
Ere he goes your skill employ
 To afford him some relief.

Noble chestnuts, if you hide
Brighter charms for summer days,
Oh ! to me the grace confide
Which precedes those full displays.

Well I know your rich attire
When October preens his wing—
Purple robes as warm as fire,
Gold crowns worthy of a king.

I have seen your branches white
Wrought with curious designs,
Which the frost portrays by night
On the silvered window panes.

I know all your stately splendour
Giant, ancient, chestnut trees,
But your Spring shoots, freshly tender,
And sweet scents, I know not these.

Fare-ye-well ! I quit your bower,
Guard ye all your brilliant bloom,
In mine eyes another flower
Yields alone the Spring's perfume.

Offerings choice let May prepare,
This one flower suffices me,
Honey pure is always there
For my soul, and for the bee.

Let the sky be blue or black,
Be the season dry or wet,
Never doth the household lack
One fair fragrant Violet.

To a Child gathering Wild Flowers.

GATHER ye wild flowers while ye may,
Now in your young life's holiday—
Hyacinth, primrose, and hawthorn spray.

Happy the flowers which meet your eye
And are plucked your desire to gratify,
Though soon in your hands they fade and die :

Wither and die and are cast away,
While yet in the woods their companions gay
Flourish and bloom for many a day.

Happier these in their early death
Yielding to you their expiring breath,
Hearing from you what sweet Pity saith.

Happier in quitting their native wild,
Because on their beauty your own has smiled,
And your innocence been by theirs beguiled.

What flower a happier fate could know
Than thus of its true worth to show
To eyes, to hearts which prize it so?

What flower? what being? for thus we live,
As each to each of our best we give,
And each from each some bliss receive.

Thus only we live ; and thus to die
And pass to our immortality—
May this be the lot, Sweet ! of you and I.

Then gather ye wild flowers while ye may,
Now in your young life's holiday,
And let not their lessons quite fade away.

To a Daughter, with a Fruit-knife.

*Wellbournette,
Robert Gordon*

THE gift of a fruit-knife implies this good wish—
May the Future provide you with many a dish
Of the sweet and the juicy, the ripe and the red,
Along with the daily allowance of bread.

The fruits you like best—may these ever abound
As year after year their seasons come round,
And the years not be few which shall leave you on earth
Enjoying their blessings with sound-hearted mirth.

One caution permit me, as duly you go
Midst the trees of the garden of life to and fro,
Pluck not of the fruit that's forbidden, lest, madam,
You prove a false Eve to some foolish fond Adam.

Multum in Parbo.

IN little much to find
Is Wisdom's highest art,
All other skill resigned,
This is her chosen part—
From things that are despised and mean,
An unguessed store of good to glean.

She hoards not useless wealth
For solitary joy,
The little that by stealth
Finds merciful employ,
Yields her a blessing as it goes,
And back again in blessing flows.

She loves not wide demesnes
Wherein to make her home,

Fairer to her than scenes

Through which the lordly roam,
The nook where sweet Content abides,
Where Patience serves, and Love provides.

She needs not many loves

To make a blissful life,
With one true lord she proves
A single-hearted wife ;
And in their dual unity
Finds life's most rich community.

She asks not many books

To fortify her mind,
With calm clear eyes she looks
Around to seek and find
Lessons to serve her daily need,
Inspire her thought, direct her deed.

She wants not many years

To lend to life its worth,
Her gracious gift endears
Her children from their birth,
By whom, in short time perfected,
She is supremely justified.

In little much to find
Is wit's prerogative :
So, reader ! may thy mind
To these vague musings give
An application and a scope
Beyond their utmost aim and hope.

Self-help.

“G O, help yourself, and then your friends will love you!”

So did some unknown cynic phrase his wit ;
And “Help yourself!” the Devil says to prove you,
When for his service he would make you fit.

“Ay, help yourself, for none besides will aid you !”
Cry they who have no faith in God or man ;
“God for His pleasure, not your own, hath made you,
And each man’s aim is to get all he can.”

Yet are there those again, who, these disowning,
Maintain the doctrine whilst to Heaven they pray,
Working, yet waiting for God’s gracious crowning,
For “Heaven helps those who help themselves,” they
say.

And these are they who, as their gains they gather,
Glow with emotions generous and true,
Devoutly grateful to the great "All-Father,"
And eagerly intent His will to do.

Self-helped, and helped of Heaven, their help they tender
To all who suffer any kind of need ;
Yielding themselves in gracious self-surrender,
Free from all taint of grudging and of greed

In the Guest-Chamber.

A GUEST ! I make no other claim
To earthly hospitality,
Nor seek by any other name
To manifest my quality.

A guest when first in infancy
Parental welcomes greeted me,
And in my sheer impotency
All heedful tendance meted me.

In boyhood and in youth a guest
Most generously entertain'd,
Made welcome ever to the best,
And in reluctant moods constrain'd.

In manhood too my claim allow'd,
Or with anticipating grace
Conceded by the eager crowd,
Which throng'd the royal feasting-place.

Nor have I fail'd to learn as true
The lesson taught so long ago—
That modest claims are oft the clue
Which leads us better than we know.

A welcome guest, in lowest seat
I was content to sit and share ;
“ Friend, go up higher, 'tis not meet,”
Mine Host has said—“ to leave thee there.”

And so by favour of my Host
I have not lack'd for daily food,
His bounty has defray'd the cost,
His wisdom seen that all was good.

Some other guest might now and then
Betray some sign of petty spleen,
Deny the equal rights of men,
Forgetful what himself had been ;

Yield with a grudge the allotted seat,
Or half usurp his neighbour's right,
And hope to poison my good meat
By sarcasm and studied slight.

Such things will be whilst *Great Goodwill*
Keeps open hall for e'en the least,
Some gluttons never get their fill,
Some starving almost miss the feast.

But this is not of His intent
Who makes the feast, and bids the guests ;
All partial practice men invent,
Regardless of their Host's behests.

Beshrew such greed, such graceless lust,
Unmannerly regard for self,
To outer darkness shall be thrust
The unworthy, the inhuman elf !

A guest must show himself a guest,
And not disdain his Host's command ;
Nor seek to lord it o'er the rest
With—Take this ! Leave that ! Crouch ! nay,
stand !

And I, a guest content to be,
Would as a guest myself demean,
Grateful for hospitality
Would manifest a thankful mien !

Take with all thankfulness the place
Assign'd me at the common board,
Partake with humbly utter'd grace
The portion granted by my Lord.

And to my fellow guests concede
Their portions and their places due,
And yield to each his proper meed—
Old courtesy for ever new.

Enhance their lot, enrich their cheer
With gracious tokens of goodwill,
Delight of their good luck to hear,
And help their cup of joy to fill.

So life shall be from first to last
A bright and blissful feast of love,
A long unbroken antepast
Of that great feast in Heaven above.

A Song by the Way.

LIST, list, my heart ! the merry birds are singing,
Filling with music all the summer air,
Catch thou the strain those messengers are bringing,

Learn thou to live a life set free from care.
Minstrels of Heaven, minstrels of God,
Sweetly inspire us as heavenward we plod.

Oft as we trudge in weakness or in sorrow,
Weary with toil in body, heart, and brain,
Joyless to-day, and hopeless for to-morrow,
Deeply our souls are thrill'd with your sweet strain.
Minstrels of Heaven, &c., &c.

Early and late your music cheers our sadness,
Rouses from sleep, and soothes us for repose,
Wakens our souls to do life's work with gladness,
Sweetly attunes to make a joyful close.
Minstrels of Heaven, &c., &c.

Minstrels sing on, for we are still forgetful,
Sing your sweet songs of trust, and joy, and love,
Till we no more, distrustful, sad, and fretful,
Rise on Faith's wings, and soar to realms above.
Minstrels of Heaven, minstrels of God,
Sweetly inspire us as heavenward we plod.

The Blackbird.

From the French of THÉOPHILE GAUTIER.

I N the tree a merry fellow
Sings his song, and gaily hops,
Sprucely dressed in black and yellow,
Though frost rimes the garden crops.

'Tis a blackbird credulous,
Knowing not the almanack,
Dreams of Spring, and tremulous
Hymns it amid winter's wrack.

High wind blows, and rain not stints,
Muddy Arve corrupts the Rhone,
And the chamber, hung with chintz,
Near the fire holds every one.

On their shoulders robes of ermine,
Judge-like, all the mountains wear,
As if gravely they'd determine
Why the winter lingers here.

Preening, drying his wet wing,
In his song the bird persists,
Confident of coming Spring
Spite of snow and rain and mists.

Loudly he upbraids the dawn
For its tardiness to rise,
Snaps a blossom from the lawn,
Welcomes Spring in chill disguise.

He foresees the last dark day,
Like a saint who trusts in God
Though the church be in decay,
And the altar bears no rood.

He in Nature's law confides
By an instinct of his heart,
And whoe'er that faith derides
Is less wise than thou, bird, art.

“ Society in 18—”.

“ FRIVOLITY, excitement, and display ”—
Are these indeed “ The Season’s ” freest bloom ?
Glaring in colour, coarse in their perfume,
What charm, what virtue, and what worth have they ?
Untoward season ! though thy blossoms gay
Bedeck the earth, and dissipate its gloom,
Fraught are they with the elements of doom,
Since where they flourish men do but decay.
Shall seed of these be ripened and re-sown,
Gather’d and garner’d for a future Spring ?
Must earth with these rank weeds be overgrown,
And Nature’s fairest flowers lie languishing ?
Oh ! rather may the winds of Heaven make moan,
And utterly uproot the accursed thing !

The Victories of Vice.

IS "vice a monster of so frightful mien,
As to be hated needs but to be seen,
Yet seen too oft familiar with her face
We first endure, then pity, then embrace"?¹

To some, sometimes, that peril may befall,
And dread of it the stoutest should appal,
For in that lapse from hate to pity and love,
Unutterable woe the soul shall prove.

But many, and more—or I misdeem the fact—
Are won to vice by subtler craft and tact,
Caught with a bait, and taken with a charm,
Snared and secured before they know alarm.

¹ The quotation is from Pope.

Vice masks for them her terrors with a smile,
And garb'd as Virtue takes the soul with guile,
Woos them, and wins, with every gracious art,
And plays, to please them, many a studied part.

Ah ! how entrancing Vice can then appear
When she would lull Suspicion's guardian—Fear !
When she would vie with Virtue, and outvie,
What softness in her tone, her touch, her eye !

Then is the hour of darkness ; then the power
Of direst evil ; then bad angels lour
To take the soul, deep-drugg'd with vain delight,
And bear it to the abyss of blackest night.

Against that hour good angels all attend us !
In that dread hour, Saviour Divine, defend us !
Almighty Father, pity and befriend us,
And for our help Thy Holy Spirit send us.

Appearance and Reality.

HER tone so tender, and her words so warm,
She surely has an embassy from Love,
Whose will to do, and his goodwill to prove,
I needs must yield me to her radiant charm.
Yet, ah ! what tremors thrill me with alarm
As, 'neath her spell, to take her hand I move ?
Can she, whose grace is kindred to the dove,
Be as a kite to do me deadly harm ?
A nearer glance reveals the subtle dread ;
And now, as when some trick of dextrous art
Hides a fiend's features in an angel's head,
Now see I that from which aghast I start—
A grisly form with hideous grimace,
Waiting to fold me in a fell embrace.

Proverbs ii. 16.

“STRANGE women ” were they who in Israel
Wrought shame and folly in the days of old ;
Strangers from heathen lands, who in God’s fold
Wrought havoc like the angel Azrael.
And strangers ever in all lands are those
Who, hating virtue, labour to entice
Maidens and youths to be the slaves of vice ;
In every land they are the State’s worst foes.
But more than all those women are most strange—
Aliens and outcasts from the commonwealth
Of public virtue and domestic health—
Who life’s essential order all derange,
Yielding their hearts to serpents of the dust,
Lending their charms for hire to heartless lust.

Epigrams.

“CRITIC,” they call’d him, “nothing if not critical :”
And fondly fancied they had hit him there ;
Said he, unhurt, if slightly enigmatical,
“And is not life a critical affair ?”

“A blind man always gets your alms :” said one
Who saw scant reason for a good deed done ;
Quick flew the answer which sufficed her then—
“Should not our alms be given unseen of men ?”

The world demands for healing—Recreation ;
The Great Physician writes :—Regeneration.

An Ode to Charity.

HAIL ! Charity benign,
Most human, most divine,
Supremest in thy birth
Of all that visit earth,
Thy primitive abode
The very heart of God ;
Thence by His grace sent down
His handiwork to crown ;
To quicken and impart
To every human heart
Its most ennobling force—
Majestic as its source ;
Its most expansive heat—
To make each one man meet
For fellowship with all ;
Its power to enthrall,

And hold in firm embrace
The universal race:
To melt and mould the will,
And fit it to fulfil
Stern Duty's high behests,
Soft Sympathy's requests ;
To train and to transform
The earth-born, earth-bound worm,
To lift it from the clod,
And bear it up to God.

Hail ! Charity divine,
Once clearly seen to shine
In One of mortal mould,
And from His heart unfold,
In words so rich and rife
With elements of life,
In deeds so kindly good,
So laden, so endued
With blessings manifold,
As tongue hath never told ;
Till at the last He gave,
All humankind to save,
That life which was His own,
And freely laid it down

A sacrifice for sin,
Redemption so to win ;
And to all sinful men
Of future time, as then,
Ensample so to give
How they should godly live.

Hail ! Charity most blest,
Mighty and manifest
Through ages long, and strange
With endless signs of change,
Yet bonded into one
By deep communion
With thee, and bringing forth
Fruits of transcendent worth ;
Still in their latest strain
Possess'd in every vein
Of ichor heaven-distill'd,
With which thy heart is fill'd.
By thee the peopled earth
Has been exempt from dearth
Of goodwill and good deeds :
Thou didst implant the seeds
Which in the souls of men
Brought forth, if sometimes ten,

Sometimes a hundred-fold.
And mighty men of old
Have still their progeny
In this late century ;
And glorious deeds are done,
And splendid trophies won,
And many foes o'erthrown
By thy good help alone.

Hail ! Charity, great Queen !
In whom all grace is seen ;
Thine is the rightful sway
Which all men should obey ;
Thine is the ancient throne
Which all with homage own ;
All trumpets sound thy fame,
All plaudits shout thy name,
And in thy sacred fane
None breathe a thought profane.

None venture to defame
Thy pure exalted name ;
Yet in that name of thine,
O Charity divine !
What deeds are daily done

Beneath the circling sun ?
Self-love estranged from thee
By deepest enmity ;
And waxing year by year
More mad in her career,
More wasteful in display,
More frivolously gay,
More practised in deceit,
More skilfully complete
In wilfulness and wile,
Strives ever to beguile,
Reaching her lowest state
In covering her hate,
And simulating love
To thee all else above.

O Charity divine !
What bitterness is thine,
When this bold jade, Self-love,
Exerts herself to prove
That, with thy full consent,
She can such means invent
To further thy designs,
As shall to all be signs
That Charity demands

No labour at their hands,
No sacrificial zeal
To serve the commonweal
No patient self-denial
To put the heart to trial.

Ah ! no, her simple plan,
Considerate of man,
In all his weak regard
For profit and reward,
Provides for each and all
Prizes or great or small,
And does not so much ask
For help in any task,
As promise that all aid
Shall be right well re-paid.

How winning are her ways !
How suasive all she says !
" Give me whate'er you can,
"Twill surely serve my plan.
By methods manifold
I can transmute to gold,
Yes ! gold the most refined,
All gifts of every kind.

“ My great resource is trade—
Oh ! no, I'm not afraid
Of any silly sneer,
Which hints that I appear
At counter or at bar
Of Charity Bazaar
A little out of place ;
There's really not a trace
Of vulgar talk or airs
At Sales and Fancy Fairs.
In our new social code
Shopkeeping *à la mode*
Ranks in the first degree
'Mong works of charity.

“ Give therefore, what you can,
'Twill surely serve my plan ;
And of your generous aid
Announcement shall be made,
Which fully shall afford
Well-merited reward,
In complimentary phrase
Of universal praise.
And this of course will be
A stimulus which we

Shall further profit by,
For many friends, who try
To stifle jealousies,
Will come, and do likewise.
Or if, as well may be,
Some new commodity
You wish to advertise,
And yet economize,
Why ! give me some to sell,
I shall delight to tell
How really good you are ;
And it, oh ! better far
Than any other sort
Of which I've heard report.
And all that I can say,
Or do by bold display,
Your interests to advance,
Shall miss no obvious chance.

“Then, too, from Charity,
So popular is she,
All can afford to buy :
Her prices may be high,
Her wares of little use,

Or none, but to refuse
To trade with her were proof
Of something in the woof
Of character, not quite
To be esteem'd polite.
It might be hard to give,
So hard it is to live,
But every one will try
Some *souvenir* to buy."

This is her chief resource,
But, full of *verve* and force,
She ventures many a move
Her loyalty to prove,
All gratefully combined
With pleasures well-designed
To hit the popular taste,
So that she may not waste
Her zeal and her endeavour—
She is so wondrous clever.

These are her winning ways :
And policy which pays
Demonstrates beyond doubt
It can't be done without.

Yet, Charity divine !
Some honest friends of thine
Distrust these modern means,
Dislike these fever'd scenes,
Misdoubt these tricks of trade,
Reject this ready aid ;
Prefer themselves to give
According as they thrive,
And would have all men so
Their zeal and kindness show,
Helping a worthy cause
With no thought of applause ;
Looking for no return
Because their hearts do burn,
Believing that thy will
They thereby best fulfil ;
And that to honour thee,
With gifts both rich and free,
Is best to do the word
Of Christ, their King and Lord.

And I, O Charity !
Who vow myself to thee
For suit and service free,
How can I spare to scorn

These weaklings who suborn
Unwilling witnesses
And call them devotees,
Who traffic in thy name
For pleasure, love, and fame,
And loyalty will feign
For mercenary gain ?

How can I gaze on thee
In raptured phantasy,
Nor doubt that Thy great heart
Is thrill'd with many a smart,
Or that thine eyes are blind
With sorrow for mankind,
Deluded by this cheat,
Trick'd by this counterfeit,
Estranged in heart from her
Whom they in name prefer,
And by unworthy aims
Dishonouring her high claims.

Who now shall solace thee,
Long-suffering Charity ?
Who rid Thy house of prayer
Of them that traffic there ?

Who check this rising tide
Of vanity and pride?
Who stay this plague? Who free
From this fatality
Thy wide-spread family?

Be thou on the alert
These evils to avert :
Look on the faithful host
Who, counting well the cost,
Forego all mean desires
Which base Self-love inspires,
And seek, and strive, and pray
The precept to obey—
As freely they receive
Freely themselves to give :
Look on them, and bestow
Such plenteous overflow
Of gifts, as shall abound
For all the world around ;
Exalting thy fair fame,
And putting quite to shame
Deceivers and deceived ;
Till thou at last received
As man's most cherish'd guest

Shalt reign in every breast,
And teach all men to know,
By sympathetic glow,
The length, breadth, depth, and height
Of Christ's love infinite.

At Guernsey.

May 22, 1885.

UPON the day that Victor Hugo died,
I chanc'd to visit the old residence
Where, through long years of exile from fair France
He lived, and nursed his patriotic pride.
In every room the man was manifest
By curious bric-à-brac or quaint device,
With some expressive motto twice or thrice,
This being one—*Exilium vita est*.
Then when full soon I heard of his decease,
And with all men was deeply moved to mourn,
Lo ! in that word *Exilium vita est*,
There came to me a messenger of peace,
And said, "Now hath the exile glorious return,
Call'd home to Him in whom all souls are blest !"

In Loco Parentis.

To a Daughter on Coming of Age.

Wilfrida 6. 5

NO! not the fulness of my thought,
Much less the fervour of my feeling,
Can in this mesh of verse be caught,
Or find in words a full revealing.

Yet none the less my heart and mind
Shall strive to gain some scant expression,
For secret love is half unkind,
And wingèd thoughts escape possession.

Oft have I pondered on the theme,
Theme how profound! of love parental,
Till more and more it came to seem
Mysterious and sacramental.

Its tenderness and mighty force
Are not alone the work of nature,
They have a more majestic source,
They own a more august dictature.

They spring within the human breast
Responsive to the Eternal Spirit,
From whom, as from a Father blest,
These gracious instincts we inherit.

Signs are they to us of a care
Which watches o'er us fondly yearning
That we in all its bliss may share,
And all its wisdom may be learning.

A care, a love, a sympathy,
Which sorrows with us in our sadness,
Which sees each tear, and hears each sigh,
And longs to change our grief to gladness.

Which knows our needs, and ever seeks
How best and kindest to supply them ;
Which knows our faults, and gladly speaks
Their pardon when we own and fly them.

Which suffers not our sins to grow
 Unchasten'd, unproved, unpunish'd ;
Nor spares the rod until we know
 The love which graciously admonish'd.

To yield to Him with childlike love,
 With fond yet reverent emotion,
Best fits the parent's heart to prove
 Its claim to filial devotion.

Learning of Him with patient care,
 And by His methods ever guided,
They who parental office bear
 Are for their functions best provided.

And to have witness'd to His Name,
 Most dear to men as the "All-Father,"
Shall be their best excuse from blame
 When they unto their fathers gather.

These frequent thoughts recur to-day
 With new intensity of meaning,
Since fit occasion comes to say
 What through long years I have been gleaning.

To say to you, who from to-day
Depend no more on my sole guidance—
“One is your Father,” Him obey
Who has been my supreme reliance.

“One is your Father ;” and if I
At all a father’s part have acted,
To Him be thanks, from Him, most high,
The love and wisdom were reflected.

“One is your Father ;” and to Him
Nearly and dearly thus related—
For all you have it is to Him
You are eternally indebted.

“One is your Father ;” evermore
You owe to Him a meek subjection,
Your womanhood must still adore
His will who claim’d your young affection.

“One is your Father ;” and to Him
I fondly, finally commend you,
These hands shall fail, these eyes grow dim,
But He for ever can befriend you.

To the Dodder.

ABOUT the gorse are wound thy filaments,
Blood-red, and delicate as Love might spin,
If from close coils his secret heart within
He should essay some fond habiliments
For gift of graciousness to one most dear,
Or mystic robe for one of rarest worth,
Or, as may sometimes need upon this earth,
Garments of gladness for a saint to wear.
Yet do these tendrils wind about my heart
As ocean weeds round limbs of drownèd men :
They are as chains which in dank darksome den
Detain some victim of tyrannic art :
For hands now cold in death first wound them there,
First showing me how exquisite they were.

An Invocation to the Earth.

On Occasion of the Death of Two Children.

TAKE them to thy breast, Mother !
Fold them to thy heart,
Brother sleeping fast with brother
Never more to part :
Take them, Mother, to thy breast,
Keep them there in perfect rest.

Well they loved thy face, Mother !
Well did they love thee,
Round about thy lap, Mother !
Play'd with tireless glee :
Take them, Mother, to thy breast,
Keep them there in perfect rest.

Well they loved thy tales, Mother !

Tales of fairy lore,
History and dreams, Mother !

Of the days of yore :
Take them, Mother, to thy breast,
Keep them there in perfect rest.

Creatures of thy world, Mother !

Well they loved them all,
Insects, birds, and beasts, Mother !

None too mean or small :
Take them, Mother, to thy breast,
Keep them there in perfect rest.

Trees, and flowers, and ferns, Mother !

All to them were dear,
Boon companions all, Mother !

Through the changing year :
Take them, Mother, to thy breast,
Keep them there in perfect rest.

Now no more they sport, Mother !

the In or wood or wold,
They have fallen asleep, Mother !

And their hearts are cold :
Take them, Mother, to thy breast,
Keep them there in perfect rest.

Hide them very deep, Mother !
 Neath thy grassy robe,
So shall Care not find, Mother !
 Though he search the globe :
Take them, Mother, to thy breast,
Keep them there in perfect rest.

Show them all the love, Mother !
 Of thine inmost heart,
Till, made one with thee, Mother !
 They are as thou art :
Take them, Mother, to thy breast,
Keep them there in perfect rest.

A Debout Supplication.

On the same occasion as the foregoing.

FATHER ! now into Thy hands
We our children's souls commend,
Broken all their earthly bands
Back to Thee they darkly wend ;
Oh ! be Thou their dwelling place,
Lift on them Thy glorious face.

Here while they have dwelt with us
They have known the fondest love,
For we sought to teach them thus
Of the better home above :
Lord, be Thou their dwelling place,
Lift on them Thy glorious face.

Mother's, father's ceaseless care
Yielded them supreme delight,
Overjoy'd were they to share
Home's endearments day and night :
Oh ! be Thou their dwelling place,
Lift on them Thy glorious face.

Love parental, home's pure bliss,
These have been their life's chief joy,
Let them not these blessings miss
Now in heaven's unknown employ :
Oh ! be Thou their dwelling place,
Lift on them Thy glorious face.

Home ! that prospect cheer'd the gloom
Which o'ercast their dying day,
And they calmly met their doom,
Bold " Our Father " still to pray :
Oh ! be Thou their dwelling place,
Lift on them Thy glorious face.

Children's hearts were theirs indeed,
Dutiful and very fond,
And whilst ours with anguish bleed
We have faith in life beyond :
Oh ! be Thou their dwelling place,
Lift on them Thy glorious face.

Love which we have known awhile

But may know no more on earth,
Shall beneath Thy gracious smile

Pour itself in holy mirth :

Oh ! be Thou their dwelling place,
Lift on them Thy glorious face.

Duty which obeyed our will

Though 'twere hard to understand,
Shall exultingly fulfil

Thy most high or least command :

Oh ! be Thou their dwelling place,
Lift on them Thy glorious face.

Thus at home for evermore

With love's highest raptures blest,
They shall not the fate deplore

Which hath torn them from our breast :

Oh ! be Thou their dwelling place,
Lift on them Thy glorious face.

We too, who with tears are blind,

And can see no light as yet,
Let us some sweet solace find

In the prayer we ne'er forget—

Oh ! be Thou their dwelling place,
Lift on them Thy glorious face.

Refusing to be Comforted.

I CANNOT choose but weep for the children fall
asleep

In the early happy morning of their life's unfolding
day,

Ere evening calm and tender, or noontide's fervent
splendour

Had disposed them for the slumber for which at night
men pray.

I cannot choose but weep, and in vain with counsel
cheap

Job's comforters surround me, and proclaim their empty
faith—

“It is better, and is best, since the children are at rest,
And shall suffer nothing now from the world's resistance
scath.”

They shall suffer nothing now ; that conclusion I allow,
Yet wot not of the comfort that the sages see therein,
For it may not be forgot that because they suffer not
They shall not gain the glory which through suffering
men may win.

To suffer is the fate of the noble and the great,
Nor may they shrink from sacrifice who seek life's
highest gain,
And Joy, the priceless treasure, is not the thing call'd
Pleasure,
But a secret subtle essence which Faith extracts from
Pain.

To be discharg'd from war when the battle looms afar
Is the sentence of the craven, not the guerdon of the
brave ;
Who greatly does he dares, and every peril shares,
Unheeding of the chances which may send him to the
grave.

How then shall we allow that the undistinguish'd brow
Adorn'd with no won laurel is blest in final sleep ?
Or how regard the lot of the children who are not,
Except with breaking heart-strings, and eyes that can
but weep ?

To sink to final rest is not better, is not best,
When life's work is unfinish'd, or as yet but just begun,
For earth shall miss the beauty which Faith, and Love,
and Duty,
And Wisdom, and Endeavour would have wrought
beneath the sun.

Would have wrought beneath the sun! for my faith in
each lost one
Permits no thought unworthy of their unfulfill'd career,
The impulse of their youth was to Nature and to Truth,
And this had grown and greaten'd with each quick
revolving year.

All generous emotion of filial devotion
Foretoken'd loyal service to the just, and good, and
true,
Nor could they fail from right who found a chief delight
In following the objects which the wise and good
pursue.

For this no scope remains, and the honourable gains
Which seem'd so surely theirs are beyond redemption
lost,

They may not win and wear them, they may not yield
and share them,
And who shall guess or reckon of such sacrifice the
cost?

I know not, nor can borrow words to express the sorrow,
The anguish of bereavement which agitates my breast,
Perplex'd, appall'd, dejected, I seem as one rejected,
Cast out from Heaven's mercy, unpitied and unblest.

My life is now beclouded, as those dear forms were
shrouded
And hidden in the darkness where shines nor sun nor
moon ;
All faces gather blackness, all forces fail with slackness,
Courage, and Hope, and Enterprise, lie sunk in deadly
swoon.

I weep, and pray, and wonder in what far future yonder,
Whither with strange complacency they calmly went
before,
I shall so learn the mystery of this strange mortal history
As that with joy unclouded I shall worship and adore.

From Grief to Gladness.

IN bitterness of grief my heart made moan—
“Now shall this sorrow which my life hath known
Its future fill with saddest undertone !

“The months and years shall bring me no respite,
The changing seasons yield me no delight,
Since they can bring not back the lost to sight !

“All scenes, all seasons shall be overcast
With gloom and sadness from that painful past,
Of which the anguish must for ever last !

“And chiefly this which marks the closing year,
This month, wherein so many ills appear,
A darker robe, a sadder face shall wear !

“ November shall no more return to me
But as remembrancer of misery,
The ghost of gladness which no more may be ! ”

I said it in my haste, yet year by year,
As swiftly, stealthily the month drew near
My heart was thrill'd with apprehensive fear.

So did it come again and yet again,
Renewing in my heart that mortal pain
Which is more wasteful than life's heaviest strain.

Once more its footsteps drawing nigh were heard,
“ November comes ! ” some gladsome lips averr'd,
But in my breast the tidings terror stirr'd.

But yesterday this dread was in my heart,
And with the dawn I look'd to see upstart
That spectre, which should not again depart

Till thirty tedious days had come and gone,
Wherein its evil mission should be done,
And I be left more hopelessly alone.

But ah ! not thus the dawn did on me rise,
It came a form of gladness to mine eyes,
It fill'd me with a jubilant surprise.

It was not as the dawn of other days—
Two sacred festivals combined their rays
To gild and glorify life's common ways.

The weekly antepast of Heavenly rest
Came now companioned by another guest—
The annual celebration of the Blest.

The Lord's-day and All-Saints'-day joined in one
Spoke to my heart of rest and victory won,
Admonish'd me of duty to be done :

No more with wasteful sorrow to repine,
But joyfully these blessings to combine,
Believe them theirs, and seek for them as mine.

“They live for whom ye sorrow as deceased,
They rest, and from all burdens are released,
They triumph, and for them all strife has ceased.

“Lift up thy heart to their high dwelling place,
Seek from their Lord His all-sufficient grace,
And run with eager joy thy heavenward race.

“Rejoice with them in their transcendent gain,
Doubt not that thou and they shall meet again,
And to that blest re-union forward strain.

“Lost from the earth, and gather’d to the skies,
Be they the stars to fix thy pilgrim eyes,
And light the path o’er which thy journey lies.

“Not the vague heaven of glory unconceiv’d,
Which Faith content implicitly believ’d,
When first the gospel message she receiv’d ;

“Not a new world of wonder and delight
Where all is strange that meets the eager sight,
And Joy shrinks thrill’d with tremors of affright ;

“Not this thy goal : not this be now thy hope,
Faith taught by Sorrow gains a wider scope,
And sees a gladder, kindlier future ope.

“That Heaven which is the haven of thy heart
Is that free port to which all souls depart
Who on the earth have chosen the better part :

“All faithful souls are there, or there shall come,
To dwell together in a radiant home,
And part no more on alien shores to roam.

“The lost whom all too fondly you deplore,
Are they not safe upon that saintly shore ?
Do they not yearn till you too shall pass o’er ?

“ Yes ! doubt not this, nor that the auspicious gale
Which at thy dread departure shall prevail,
To guide thy course and fill thy spreading sail,

“ Will bring thee quickly where thy soul would be,
Where dwell the good, the true, so dear to thee,
Whom on the earth ye never more may see.

“ Doubt not ! but evermore this hope believe,
Fear not ! but evermore this joy receive,
And cease for spirits glorified to grieve.

“ Then shall the months and years sweet solace know,
Nor seem to linger, nor too swiftly go,
Nor hold thee fetter'd to thy lot below.

“ Returning not upon forsaken ways,
Nor looking back with dim regretful gaze
To joys or sorrows of thine earlier days,

“ They shall coerce thee to pursue thy race
With bounding heart and ever buoyant pace,
Intent on reaching that appointed place,

“ Where, with the convoy of a heavenly band,
Ye shall your parting make from earth's chill strand,
To cross Death's straits into the promised land.”

The Heavenly Home.

WHAT were earth without the children
 Making music in its homes,
In the highways and the byways
 Making mirth where'er one roams ;
Fairer than the garden flowers,
 Blither than the birds of air,
Banishing the broods of evil,
 Doubling every joy they share ?

What is earth when Death untimely—
 So we deem it—steals away
Happy children from the fireside,
 And the garden where they play ;
Breaks into the joyous circle
 Seated at the social board,
Takes the youngest, fairest, fondest—
 Claims the choicest from our hoard ?

Darkness gathers in the chambers,
Silence on the music falls,
Human voices lose their sweetness,
Daintiest enjoyment palls ;
And we sit and sigh for pinions,
Long to flee away to rest,
Turn from earth, and yearn for heaven,
There to be for ever blest.

But that heaven for which we languish
With its visions, raptures, songs—
What were it without fair children
Mingling in its ransom'd throngs ?
What were it if with the ancients—
Patriarchs, prophets, sages, saints
Gather'd from the earth's ripe harvest—
Were no Holy Innocents ?

What were heaven without the children
Torn or borne from earth away ?
Not the heaven of human instinct ;
Not the heaven for which we pray ;
Not the house of many mansions
Where the eternal Father dwells ;
Not God's Kingdom, His and ours,
Of which Christ the Saviour tells.

Yes ! it must be, chosen children
Gathered to the home on high,
Add strong links of sweet completeness
To the heavenly family :
Though, alas ! they are and must be.
Gather'd from our earthly homes,
In a time of desolation
Bleak as winter when it comes.

Great the loss and deep the sorrow
When fond children have to go—
Earthly bonds exact their forfeit,
Hearts will bleed, and tears will flow ;
But our faith the hope shall cherish
That the dear ones lost to earth,
Will within the heavenly city
Yield us a peculiar mirth.

The Debt of Love.

NOT with adequate regret
Can I ever pay the debt
Due, in love, to those who died
Ere Love's claims were satisfied.

Ever freely did I pay
Love's demands from day to day,
While as yet Love dwelt below,
And could claim what I might owe.

Nothing did I grudge or stint
Of the coinage of Love's Mint,
Paid, and gladly over-paid
Every claim Love ever made.

Ah! but Love has other aims
Than to press its own just claims,
Love can only love and live
By its boundless power to give.

Love is lavish of its own,
Pours its wealth of treasure down,
Begs the needy to partake,
Urges them for its dear sake.

So it was Love dwelt with me,
So it was Love dealt with me,
Made me rich, and made me strong,
Taught me many a joyful song.

Not ungrateful, I, the while,
Basking in Love's gracious smile,
Thought and sought how best to prove
All my thankfulness to Love.

Not in vain I thought and sought
To work the works which Love had taught ;
Often, as I fondly strove,
Got I some good word from Love.

Till at last it came to this—
Love and I paid kiss for kiss,
Word for word, and deed for deed,
Vying each with each in speed.

So it was. Then while we toy'd,
And so sweetly were employ'd,
Came a *Voice* and call'd away
Love, who could not disobey.

Forth he went : I sat alone
Wondering at that awful tone,
Which to me was full of pain,
But to which Love answer'd fain.

Well I knew that Love would come
Never more to my lone home,
In the form and with the voice
Which had made my heart rejoice.

Yet that loss reveal'd new gain—
Soon I found, amid my pain,
Love had left in legacy
Wondrous wealth bequeath'd to me.

Wealth I never can compute,
Though, unable to be mute,
I must in my sorrow yet
Make avowal of my debt.

Such a store of joy I find
In this treasure left behind,
That I never can be poor,
Can be joyless nevermore.

Let who will withhold their love,
Whoso may ungrateful prove,
This I had, and this I have—
Love safe garner'd in the grave.

Yea ! I doubt not, as one saith—
Love is mightier than Death,
And triumphant in the skies
Bends on me benignant eyes.

So I live—Love's legatee !
Holding both the worlds in fee ;
Revelling in wealth untold,
Envyng no man's goods or gold.

And since adequate regret
Never can discharge my debt,
Joy and Thankfulness shall pay
Such glad tribute as they may.

Death and Life.

MUST Death appraise our precious gems
Or ever we can know their worth ?
Gleam they but dimly on the earth
While set in human diadems ?

Too truly, we do oft misprize
The jewels that enrich our life,
The child, the mother, and the wife,
Till snatch'd for ever from our eyes.

The saintliest souls do show some flaws,
Which love too readily will note ;
And human eyes have all their mote
Disturbing vision's perfect laws.

But no ! it is not Death doth fix
 Their value, and their worth reveal,
 Death labours only to conceal,
And with dull dross their glories mix.

'Tis Thou ! the Lord of Life, dost claim
 And take them for Thy precious ones,
 And lo ! henceforth as living stones
Upon Thy coronet they flame.

Oh ! fix our gaze, and fill our thought
 With these pure rays of living light,
 That e'en our sorrows may be bright
With radiance from Thy glory caught.

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